

Maine Conservation Corps

Handbook



AmeriCorps “Getting Things Done”

Maine Conservation Corps

AmeriCorps Handbook

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MAINE CONSERVATION CORPS

HANDBOOK

This handbook has been designed to provide information about the Maine Conservation Corps AmeriCorps Program. It is a reference tool and we hope that it will be helpful in providing you with some of the answers to questions you may have.

Welcome to the Maine Conservation Corps!

The Maine Conservation Corps

The Maine Conservation Corps was established by the governor and legislature in 1983. The MCC operates programs that accomplish natural resource projects.

MCC AmeriCorps members serve in two programs:

Environmental Educators: Members are partnered with local non-profit organizations and natural resource agencies such as Maine Department of Environmental Protection, University of Maine Cooperative Extension Water Quality Office and Maine Public Utilities Commission where they focus on recruiting, managing and training volunteers for water quality stewardship, developing environmental education curriculum, conducting outreach presentations teacher training workshops.

Field Team Program: Members are partnered with local non-profit organizations, municipalities and state and federal agencies such as Portland Trails and Acadia National Park. Team Members perform trail construction and maintenance projects throughout the state of Maine.

History of National Service

In times of great need, Americans have always answered the call of service. Ever since our nation was founded by citizens who risked everything to establish freedom, America has been able to offer freedom to more Americans, and to eliminate discrimination and other great injustices. From the American Revolution to the Civil Rights Movement and from the smallest farms to the biggest cities, Americans have worked together to improve their communities and their lives.

America's tradition of service has always had strong roots in its communities. The country's vast network of civic and religious organizations, schools, and businesses has been key in bringing people together to meet common goals. Since the 19th century, foreign observers have noted that through these groups Americans have shown a consistent commitment of service by building new homes, protecting public spaces, and helping those in need.

1933: Franklin D. Roosevelt creates the Civilian Conservation Corps.

The origins of the Maine Conservation Corps stem from President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) program developed during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The CCC was developed as part of the Emergency Work Act and passed at Senate Bill on March 31, 1933. The purpose of the CCC was to recruit thousands of young men in a peacetime army to work in forests and parks, the lands and waters that constitute our basic natural resources.

The CCC had an immediate economic and social impact on the nation. By 1935 the CCC had created jobs for over 600,000 young men across the nation and over 3 million men would participate in the program before it disbanded in 1942. The need for supplies ranging from food to equipment provided even more jobs. Corps members were required to send \$25.00 of their \$30.00 monthly wage to their families, thus expanding markets at home.

By taking young men off the streets and giving them jobs, the CCC created a positive impact on society. These young men were given a healthy work environment, learned how to live and work together as a team, and many learned how to read and write. CCC members built fire towers, truck roads, and firebreaks; planted millions of trees; reclaimed thousands of acres from erosion; built countless federal and state parks and campgrounds; salvaged timber from the New England hurricane blow-downs of 1938; and improved fish and wildlife habitats.

The MCC has continued the traditions and service ethic of the Civilian Conservation Corps. The MCC works in partnership with natural resource organizations throughout the state of Maine to accomplish projects of long-term benefit for public and private non-profit organizations. These natural resource projects provide jobs, job training, and conservation education. The MCC is dedicated to building self-esteem, teamwork, leadership, and encouraging the aspirations of its corps members.

1961: The Peace Corps is established.

Volunteers in Service to America, or VISTA, began in the 1960s. VISTA is now part of AmeriCorps and engages adults in helping low-income communities help themselves.

1983: The Maine Conservation Corps is established.

The Maine Conservation Corps was established in 1983 and operates both year round and seasonally on projects throughout Maine. The MCC has a history of working in partnership with local, state, federal and private non-profit organizations, as well as job training offices throughout the state of Maine. In 2008, November 14th was proclaimed Maine Conservation Corps Day by the governor in celebration of the Maine Conservation Corps 25th anniversary and the Civilian Conservation Corps 75th anniversary.

The MCC assists natural resource agencies throughout the state of Maine to accomplish projects of long-term benefit for public and private non-profit organizations. These natural resource projects provide service employment to many people from Maine and other states. The MCC is dedicated to building self-esteem, teamwork, leadership, and encouraging the aspirations of members through service employment.

1993: AmeriCorps is launched.

In his Inaugural Address, Bill Clinton challenged Americans to “seasons of service” around the country. In May 1993, President Clinton introduced historic legislation to expand opportunities for young Americans to serve our country, build up their communities, and earn awards for their own education in return. Months later, Democrats and Republicans in Congress joined together to pass the bill creating AmeriCorps and the agency that administers it, the Corporation for National Service. President Bill Clinton signed the legislation, the National and Community Service Trust Act, on September 21, 1993.

AmeriCorps Mission and Objectives

For most of the past decade the MCC has been an AmeriCorps program and we are proud to support the AmeriCorps movement that unites diverse Americans to improve our communities, as demonstrated in the AmeriCorps Ethic of Service outlined below:

Getting Things Done: Above all, AmeriCorps is about getting things done. There is much that needs to be done to make our schools better, our streets safer, our families healthier, and our environment cleaner. AmeriCorps members are committed to meeting the needs of America.

Strengthening Communities: In addition to meeting unmet needs, AmeriCorps will strengthen America’s communities by connecting the civic groups, schools and religious organizations that make America’s neighborhoods vibrant, and by bringing Americans together from all different backgrounds in the common work of service. Through AmeriCorps, diverse AmeriCorps Members can preserve their special qualities, recognize their common ones, and bring their communities together.

Encouraging Responsibility: Responsibility includes duties to self, family, community, and country. The idea is simple: actively contributing to your community, being dependable for those who depend on you; and living up to your fullest potential.

Expanding Opportunities: The AmeriCorps experience can expand your options in many ways, providing priceless life and job skills. AmeriCorps reflects the idea of reciprocity: when you give something great to your country, you get something back in return. AmeriCorps creates opportunity for those who take responsibility.

For MCC AmeriCorps members, this translates into the following:

- Work on community conservation and environmental service projects
- Promote, build and serve with community partners
- Develop citizenship and personal responsibility
- Study natural and environmental sciences, and ecological and conservation issues
- Assist teaching environmental and conservation education in public school
- Construct and maintain trails on state, federal and public lands

An additional priority of the Corporation for National and Community Service is to provide resources in times of natural or man-made disasters and emergencies. The Maine Commission for Community Service may call up and deploy AmeriCorps members to respond to disasters in a local or national emergency disaster relief effort. The deployment may continue for up to 10% of the member's service time (up to a maximum of 120 hours) over the course of year of service. During the period of deployment the program will continue to pay the living allowance and insurance for AmeriCorps members. All AmeriCorps program policies, terms and condition shall continue while on special disaster relief assignment. All benefits and protections afforded and provided to AmeriCorps members shall continue while AmeriCorps members remain on special disaster relief assignment. AmeriCorps members may continue to accrue service hours during any deployment if their assignment takes them away from their regular service assignment during normal working hours. Although the Program is required to allow the deployment, individual Members and Sites may request an automatic exemption due to service assignment disruption or Members personal situation.

The Maine Conservation Corps Mission & Objectives

The mission and objective of the Maine Conservation Corps program is to offer members an opportunity to experience a different way of living, learning, and serving. Serving with the MCC also enhances their personal development and ability to serve their community by accomplishing significant conservation and environmental service projects which will protect and restore natural resources and public lands.

Accomplish Conservation Projects: This is the primary principle of all MCC programs, but is most closely associated with the teams of young people put to work on projects around the state. They build and rehabilitate campsites and trails (more non-motorized trails than any other organization in Maine), build outdoor learning centers for schools, construct cabins, picnic shelters, bridges and erosion control structures, maintain boundaries, and improve wildlife habitat and timber stands.

Create Conservation Employment: The MCC develops strong work and community service ethics, teamwork, communication, appropriate self-esteem and confidence, safety, other basic job skills and outdoor skills. Members receive a living allowance, health insurance, and opportunities for networking and gaining experience in environmental careers.

Provide Conservation Education: MCC strives to raise awareness and interest in the natural environment. Individual members serve with a school or other organization for a year; individualized curricula are developed, teachers trained, outdoor learning centers constructed and conservation education activities conducted.

Engage Conservation Volunteers: The MCC assists public and non-profit groups by identifying volunteer opportunities, recruiting, matching, providing insurance for, and supporting volunteers and interns and their supervisors. Volunteers are also recruited to work with MCC teams.

AmeriCorps Member Benefit Information

Members may be eligible for deferment of student loans, with interest paid upon completion of service and may also qualify for child care reimbursement.

Members who fulfill terms of service will receive education awards as listed below:

1700 Hours	\$4,725.00
900 Hours	\$2,362.50
450 Hours	\$1,250.00
300 Hours	\$1,000.00

Members who do not complete their terms of service including hours and length of time as stated in their contracts, will forfeit their Education Award.

Maine Conservation Corps Member Benefit Information

MCC members receive a living allowance (less applicable taxes), a Maine State Park Pass, health insurance during their terms of service, and are covered under Maine Conservation Corps' General Liability and Workers Compensation Insurance policies.

Please note that members and volunteers are NOT entitled to receive unemployment compensation at the completion of their service.

Holiday, Sick and Personal Leave Time

MCC does not provide traditional Holiday, Sick and Personal Leave time. Organizations depend on the service MCC members and host site programs provide. We ask that members be mindful of the commitment they have made to serve their communities and complete their projects.

AmeriCorps / Maine Conservation Corps Policies and Procedures

AmeriCorps Policies on Prohibited Activities

The MCC is an AmeriCorps program supporting the ethic of the National Service movement and the guidelines of the AmeriCorps program.

Prohibited activities during service time include:

- Participating in efforts to influence legislation.
Examples include but are not limited to:
 - 1) Lobbying for your program
 - 2) Organizing a letter writing campaign to Congress

- 3) Engaging in partisan political activities or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office
 - 4) Participating in or endorsing events/activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials
 - 5) Printing politically charged articles in a Corporation for National Service funded newsletter or listserv
 - 6) Taking part in political demonstrations or rallies
 - 7) Engaging in any efforts to influence legislation, including state or local ballot initiatives
 - 8) Voter registration drives
 - 9) Organizing or participating in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes
- Assisting or deterring union organizing
 - Impairing existing contracts or collective bargaining agreements
 - Activities that pose a significant safety risk to participants
 - Assignments that displace employees
 - Placement of members into internships with for-profit businesses as a part of the education and training component of the program
 - Providing assistance to businesses organized for profit
 - Religious activities.
 - 1) Engaging in religious instruction or conducting worship services providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship. This includes requiring the member to attend any spiritual or religious services as part of placement activities. This also includes requiring members to conform to certain religious behaviors or dress in specific religious/spiritual attire, etc.
 - 2) Constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship.
 - 3) Engaging in any form of religious proselytization.
 - Fundraising (not more than 10% of member's time)
 Members may not prepare any part of a grant proposal or perform other fundraising functions for the program or include:
 - 1) Members may solicit supplies from local businesses for a direct service project (e.g., soliciting several cans of paint from a store near a work site to meet a need).
 - 2) Members may organize an occasional "serve-a-thon" or other activities that raise funds or in-kind contributions while promoting community support and directly supporting an approved objective of the program. These activities cannot be the primary program activity or involve significant amounts of a member's time.

Maine Conservation Corps Policies and Procedures

In your agreement to participate in the MCC program, you have made a choice that requires you to take on added responsibilities that affect you and your community. These policies and guidelines were written with the consideration of your safety and well being. It is important that you know and respect these policies, and adhere to them. Infractions will lead to disciplinary action and may mean dismissal from the program. Please ask questions about these policies if you feel that you do not completely understand their justifications.

Being a member of the MCC program requires a commitment to service. As an important part of the MCC program, you will not be able to act solely for yourself. Your actions will affect everyone else in the program, the future standing of the program and the program's reputation in the community. The policies listed below, have been developed to maintain the integrity of the program and are non-negotiable

Drug/Alcohol Policy

In accordance with the Drug Free Workplace Act, 41 U.S.C.~701 et seq. Implementing regulations, 45 C.F.R. Part 2542, and the Maine Conservation Corps rules and regulations.

- The legal drinking age in the State of Maine is 21 years of age. Possession or use of alcohol by individuals who are under the legal drinking age is prohibited at all times. Individuals who are 21 years or older are prohibited from purchasing alcohol for individuals who are under the legal drinking age.
- The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the Maine Conservation Corps program.
- Arrest or conviction of any criminal drug statute must be reported in writing by the Member to the Program Coordinator within five days of the arrest or conviction.
- The Members continued participation in the program is conditioned upon compliance with the notice requirements.
- An appropriate action for the Member including suspension and/or referral to a drug rehabilitation program or release for cause consistent with the Corporation for National Service's rules on termination and suspension of service will be taken by the Program Director.
- In implementing the Drug Free Workplace Act, the Maine Conservation Corps Program will adhere to Federal laws and its grant assurances related to alcohol and substance abuse non-discrimination and confidentiality.
- The Maine Conservation Corps supports members seeking a drug awareness program, information about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace, drug counseling, rehabilitation, and member assistance or member support services.
- Consumption of alcohol is not allowed by any member of the Maine Conservation Corps during a session of service. A session of service begins and ends according to a schedule assigned to the team by the Program Coordinator, and includes all scheduled and unscheduled time during the session.

Alcohol and drug use and abuse adversely affects health, may create dangerous situations, and serves to undermine the community's confidence in the Maine Conservation Corps programs. Therefore, the MCC prohibits the use of illegal drugs or alcohol during service hours. Tobacco has also been shown to adversely affect a user's health and, in some cases, the health of those who are exposed to secondhand smoke. Therefore, MCC members who do smoke will be considerate of others and minimize exposure to other individuals.

Definitions

- Substance: alcohol or drugs
- Alcohol: ethyl alcohol or ethanol
- Drugs: illegal substance taken in the body, other than alcohol, which may impair one's mental facilities and/or physical performance.
- Abuse: use of any illegal drug, or use of any drug, alcohol, or over-the-counter or prescription drugs where use is not in conformance with performance with prescription requirements, or occurs in circumstances where use is not permitted.
- Tobacco: any tobacco product including cigarettes, chewing tobacco (and other smokeless tobacco products), pipes and cigars.

Sexual Harassment Policy

I. General Policy Statement

The Maine Conservation Corps (MCC) recognizes the dignity of its members and the right of members to work in an environment which is free of intimidation and harassment. Such intimidation or harassment based on race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, whistleblower activity, previous assertion of a claim or marital status is a violation of State policy. Because such harassment seriously undermines the integrity of the work place and adversely affects employee morale, it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In addition, it is considered grounds for disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

Examples of harassment related to race or color, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, whistleblower activity or previous assertion of a claim include the following, which may be a series of incidents or a single occurrence:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, gestures, comments, or contact;
- Threats;
- Offensive jokes;
- Subjecting employees to ridicule, slurs, or derogatory actions;
- Inequitable disciplinary actions and work assignments.

Further examples of sexual harassment include: behavior that is verbal and sexual in nature – such as comments about a person's looks, personal inquiries, sexual jokes, use of derogatory sexual stereotypes, uttering sexually suggestive sounds, writing sexual notes, **non-verbal sexual behavior**- such as looking someone up and down, staring or leering at someone's body, deliberate blocking of a person's path, displaying sexual visuals, making sexual gestures; or **physical** – such as pinching, grabbing, sexual assault or any physical contact of a sexual nature.

II. Retaliation

Any form of retaliatory action or threat or suggestion of retaliation by either MCC members or supervisors against any person filing a complaint under this policy or assisting in an investigation is a violation of State policy. Any discriminatory action against any individual

because the individual has opposed a practice that would be a violation of the Maine Human Rights Act, Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or the Age Discrimination in Employment Act or because the individual has made a charge, testified or assisted in any investigation, proceeding or hearing under the Maine Human Rights Act, Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Age Discrimination in Employment Act is illegal. A complainant is protected from retaliation regardless of the merits of the original complaint. Retaliation should be reported in the same manner as described above for complaints of harassment and will be promptly investigated. Such retaliatory conduct will be grounds for disciplinary action.

Deb Phillips, the NRSC Human Resource Director, is available for anyone with questions. She can be reached at (207) 287-4925.

Background Check Policy

Purpose: These procedures are intended to ensure public confidence and security, and to ensure that the AmeriCorps program is appropriately qualified and credentialed.

General Background Review

- Position postings will include a statement that information provided during the application, interview and selection processes may be verified.
- Members will sign that the application is true, correct and complete to the best of the applicant's knowledge.
- The member may have to submit information not specifically requested on the application form.
- MCC may verify any information provided in the application process.
- MCC will conduct reference checks.
- MCC may release information to authorized partners, and/or employees of the State of Maine which may include, but are not limited to, information concerning past work, present work, attendance, evaluations, educational records (including transcripts), military service, criminal records, and any other personal record deemed necessary to verify the information provided in the application or during the selection process.
- Supplying erroneous information or omitting pertinent information as part of the application process may be sufficient cause for discharge.

Verification of AmeriCorps Application Information

- Verification of information pertaining to applicants is a responsibility that is shared by MCC and appointing authorities. MCC is responsible to ensure that applications are complete.

References

- References must be obtained before an offer is made or, if necessary, before the member starts work.

Conducting the Background Checks

- Criminal background checks shall be conducted on all MCC members.
 - A criminal record may legitimately be considered pursuant to AmeriCorps requirements.
- A National Sex Offender Public Registry (NSOPR) shall be conducted on all MCC members.
 - A NSOPR may legitimately be considered pursuant to AmeriCorps requirements.

Opportunity to Respond to Background Check

If a person is denied a position with MCC because of information obtained through a criminal background check, the person shall receive written notice of the reasons for denial and shall have an opportunity to respond to the reasons.

Additional Background Check Information

- When the member will be required to spend a significant amount of time driving a State-owned or privately-owned vehicle conducting State business a driving record check may be conducted.
 - When the operation of a motor vehicle is a regular component of employment, a candidate's driving record may legitimately be considered as a factor in the selection process.
 - Members using a vehicle owned by the State of Maine are required to adhere to the *VEHICLE USE AGREEMENT* provided by Risk Management.

Verification of Identity

- Verification of identity and eligibility for employment will be verified by an agency human resource representative [Form I-9] when completing new member paperwork.

Diversity/Equal Opportunity Policy

The Maine Conservation Corps is committed to equal employment for all persons regardless of race, creed, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry, age, handicap, marital status, political affiliation, arrest or conviction record, or membership in the military service. The Program Coordinator is obligated to select Corps members who bring diversity.

The MCC shall, in all solicitations or advertising for members and volunteers for community service placed by or on behalf of the MCC relating to this program shall state that all qualified applicants shall receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religious creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability.

The MCC shall inform the contracting Department's Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator of any discrimination complaints brought to an external regulatory body (Maine Human Rights Commission, EEOC, Office of Civil Rights) against their agency by any individual as well as any lawsuit regarding alleged discriminatory practice.

The MCC shall comply with all aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in employment and in the provision of service to include accessibility and reasonable accommodations for employees and clients.

Discrimination Policy

As a member of the Maine Conservation Corps AmeriCorps Program, you are required to maintain and uphold a safe, friendly and discrimination-free environment for everyone involved. You can expect to work with a diverse group from different backgrounds and values. Discrimination of any type will not be tolerated and may be grounds for dismissal.

If you observe any discriminatory behavior, report this to the Program Coordinator, the Host Site Supervisor or the MCC Director. If the incidence involves any of these people, follow the MCC Grievance Procedure.

Discrimination claims can be reported directly, within 180 days of the alleged incident, to: Directorate of Civil Rights, US Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, Washington, DC 20210.

Code of Conduct Policy

While in service the MCC member is expected to:

- Demonstrate mutual respect towards others
- Follow directions
- Direct concern, problems and suggestions to the appropriate Program Official
- Maintain a positive attitude towards service to the public
- Not engage in any activity involving proselytizing or assisting religious organizations, attempting to influence legislation or an election, or aide a partisan political organization, helping or hindering union activity, or aiding a business organized for profit
- Participate in all educational and service components of the program
- Complete assignments in a safe, timely and satisfactory manner
- Wear appropriate clothing or uniform when participating in service projects
- Field Team members will participate with other members at the service project sites with residential group living tasks

At no time may the Member:

- Engage in any activity that is illegal under local, state or federal law
- Engage in activities that pose a significant safety risk to others, including aggressive behavior or fighting

The Member understands that the following acts will also constitute a violation of the Program's rules of conduct:

- unauthorized tardiness
- unauthorized absences

- repeated use of inappropriate language (i.e. profanity) in the Program, including service sites and Program housing sites
- stealing or lying
- engaging in activity that may physically or emotionally damage other Corps Members or members of the community
- possessing firearms or other weapons on or around the service site or any residential facility
- possessing or using illegal drugs during the term of service
- consuming or being under the influence of alcohol during the performance of service activities or while in residential status at any MCC lodging facility
- failure to notify the Program of any criminal arrest or conviction that occurs during the term of service, or one prior to the term of service, which may impact the ability of the Member to participate fully in the Program

Standard of Service Statement

MCC has a high standard of service and a positive reputation. Our partners have high expectations of what our MCC members can accomplish. The character, experience, and skills of the members of this program have succeeded in making a significant impact in this state. As a member of this program you will be following in these footsteps. Your own personal standard of service must be set high. It is a lot of hard work, but the rewards are tremendous

MCC Disciplinary Procedure

For violating the stated rules, MCC will do the following:

- for the MCC Member's first offense, an appropriate MCC official will issue a verbal warning
- for the MCC Member's second offense, an appropriate MCC official will issue a written warning and reprimand to the Member
- for the MCC Member's third offense, the Member may be suspended without compensation
- for the fourth offense, MCC may release the Member for cause

MCC reserves the right to release the MCC Member for cause if, in the opinion of the Program Director, his/her conduct undermines the effectiveness of the Program or the project to which he/she is assigned.

MCC may release the MCC Member for cause if, in the opinion of the Program Director, he/she repeatedly or periodically demonstrates inappropriate behavior by engaging in a pattern of misconduct.

However, the above disciplinary procedure will NOT be followed if the infraction is serious enough to warrant a different process. The Member understands that he/she will be either suspended or released for cause for committing certain acts during the term of service such as being convicted or charged with a violent felony, possession, sale or distribution of a controlled substance.

Grievance Procedures

Members who have a concern about the MCC Program, specifically if they have a grievance concerning assignments, evaluations, non-selection of members, displacement of employees, duplication of activities by MCC, or disciplinary action taken against them by the MCC may:

- First, take their concern/grievance to their Program Coordinator.
- If they are not satisfied with the response of the Program Coordinator, they may appeal to the Director of the MCC in writing, describing in detail the issue they are grieving.
- If the Member is appealing a disciplinary action, the first appeal is made to the highest-ranking staff person who was officially part of the disciplinary action.
- If all appeals to the Program Staff are unsatisfactory, the Member may request resolution through alternative dispute resolution (ADR), such as mediation. The program Director may agree to ADR or may refer the Member to the formal grievance proceeding.
- If ADR is not used or is not successful, the Member may appeal, in writing, to the Director of the Bureau of Employment Services (BES), Maine Department of Labor, 55 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333, and request a hearing. The BES Director will refer the matter to an administrative hearing officer to hear the opposing sides of the issue and render a decision on the grievance.
- If the decision is adverse to the grievant or no decision is reached, the grievant may request binding arbitration.
- All actions under this process must be taken in a timely fashion. The maximum allowable times are those given in the AmeriCorps Grievance requirements at 42 U.S.C. §12636 and 45 C.F.R. § 2540.230 as follows:

Timeline for Grievance Procedures

- Within 1 year of alleged occurrence → GRIEVANCE FILED
- Within 30 days of filing of grievance → HEARING
- Within 60 days of filing of grievance → DECISION
- If decision is adverse to grievant, or 60 days after filing grievance if no decision has been reached → REQUEST FOR BINDING ARBITRATION
- Within 45 days after request for arbitration, or within 30 days after arbitrator appointed BINDING ARBITRATION HEARING
- Within 30 days of arbitration hearing → BINDING ARBITRATION DECISION.

Unless otherwise agreed to by the parties, any program action that is being grieved will remain in effect unless the action is finally overruled or modified in the ADR, grievance hearing, or binding arbitration process.

Maine Conservation Corps Member Rights and Responsibilities

- Members receive a living allowance in regular installments.
- Members who fail to submit two consecutive timesheets will face suspension resulting in a loss of the member's living allowance.
- Members are required to complete the entire term of service in order for members to earn the education award. These hours are only a minimum number of hours, and should in no way be considered anything but a minimum.
- Members are expected to comply by the work schedule established by the host agency and MCC. Unexcused absences or lateness, or not showing up for the project will result in disciplinary action, which may lead to suspension or dismissal.
- Members are covered by Worker's Compensation Insurance.
- Members are expected to participate in all program activities, including monthly meetings, and all-corps service days. Members are expected to be physically present and mentally ready to begin at designated times.
- Members are expected to be respectful and considerate of each other at all times.
- Members' must respect religious customs.
- Members, when not engaged in officially sanctioned program activities, are not under the supervision of MCC or the host site nor are the MCC or the host site responsible or liable for a member's personal actions or safety.
- Members are not allowed to engage in relationships with students or volunteers to whom they provide service. It is unprofessional (and possibly illegal) for people in a supervisory role to engage in a relationship with someone they have been in a mentor/role model relationship with.
- MCC prohibits intimate or family relationships within the chain of command in order to prevent compromising the ability to supervise.
- Members must wear appropriate clothing or uniform when participating in service activities. Clothing should be neat and language appropriate.
- Members must ensure that all volunteers serving at your service site, (including friends and family) must sign a Volunteer Service Agreement before beginning. MCC recommends this form be sent to the MCC Program Coordinator weekly.

General Safety and Emergency Action

Should you become injured while 'on the job', you will need to notify the MCC office immediately so that the Worker's Compensation information can be submitted in a timely fashion. We will need to report your injury within 48 hours. Keep all of your paperwork from the hospital or doctor's office - we may need to forward this information to the Worker's Compensation Board. If you visit a facility, make sure to tell them that you are a member of the Maine Conservation Corps and not the host site agency.

In addition, if for any reason a member must end her/his term of service before the agreed-upon end date (for college, graduate school, unforeseen circumstances, etc.), he/she must inform the Host Site Supervisor and the MCC AmeriCorps Program Coordinator as soon as possible so that projects are completed before the member's departure.

Emergency Contact List

In the event of an emergency, use the following to notify and find help.

MCC Office 1-800-245-5627 or 207-624-6085

Steven Gaffney (W) 207-624-6088 (C) 207-557-4060

Sara Knowles (W) 207-624-6090 (C) 309-255-7286

Jo Hersom (W) 207-624-6091 (H) 207-582-9040

Linda Shapleigh (W) 207-624-6086 (H) 207-238-6136

Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222

Maine State Police 1-800-452-4664

Division of Risk Management 1-800-525-1252

MEMIC 1-800-636-4292

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Environmental Educator Policies and Guidelines

Holiday, Sick and Personal Leave Time

- MCC members receive a weekly or biweekly living allowance.
- All members must request time off for personal or planned medical reasons **2 weeks in advance from their Host Site Supervisor and the MCC Program Coordinator**. Requests for time off cannot be guaranteed.
 - ✓ MCC members who anticipate missing service time, and who request personal leave in advance, must make arrangements to make up missed time during the remainder of their term of service.
- If a member is injured during work hours and needs to obtain medical treatment, all hours involved in travel to and from the medical facility, as well as time spent at the medical facility will be counted for service.
- When a member is unable to resume work duties due to illness, personal leave, a work related injury or other circumstances the member may be suspended from the program until they return to service. This suspension will not be related to disciplinary action.
- MCC members who fall behind in their service hours are at risk for forfeiting their AmeriCorps Education Award.

Time Management

- All members must submit a timesheet at the end of each week.
- ALL forms are considered Official Documents of the MCC AmeriCorps Program and must be signed in **Blue or Black ink ONLY**.
- Timesheets are in Excel Spreadsheet format Excel – it is recommended that you view the timesheet at 75%
- ORIGINAL timesheets are due in the MCC office every Wednesday, NO LATER THAN 1:00 pm. Timesheets received after 1:00 pm on Wednesday will NOT be processed until the following week and may result in reprimand. Members who do not submit a completed timesheet for two consecutive weeks may be suspended from the program and will not receive their living allowance during the period of suspension.
- **Countable hours:** Members count hours according to AmeriCorps rules in order to qualify for education awards. These rules are also consistent with State of Maine rules for employees. The following activities are allowable as time for members:
 - ✓ Time directly used for service and training
 - ✓ Travel time from your Host Site to training and return – If a member travels directly from home to the training (with permission of their Supervisor) the member will count their actual travel time.
 - ✓ Two 15-minute breaks each day

- **Non Countable hours:**
- You must take at least ½ hour for lunch, and it does not count for hours.
- Daily travel time from your home to the office or worksite each day.
- Timesheet **MUST** include:
 1. Member's Name
 2. Week Ending (Saturday's date) in mm/dd/yy format
 3. Date - Day only - without the month and year.
 4. Hours – DO NOT CHANGE SHADED BOXES.
All hours are entered in decimal format in .25 hour increments.
 - Fund-raising hours
 - Contact MCC Program Coordinator for approval before fund-raising
 - Training Hours (if applicable)
 - AmeriCorps allows members to receive up to 20% of your Service Hours for training relevant to their position and/or general member development. All training hours are tracked in the middle column of the timesheet. Travel time from the Host Site to an approved training and back to the Host Site is not logged under Training Hours. (see Direct Service Hours)
 - Direct service hours
 - All other hours are logged as Direct Service Hours.
 - Travel time from the Host Site to an approved training and back to the Host Site is logged under Direct Service Hours.
 5. Service Site – document where service was performed each day.
 6. Write a brief daily reflection. Also include challenges at your site such as workload, communication issues and training. (3 line limit for each day.)
 7. "Volunteer of the Month" Nomination – when working with an outstanding volunteer, please include their name and why they are outstanding.
 8. Before printing and signing your timesheet:
 - Check for completeness
 - Check daily and weekly totals for accuracy.
 9. Save each timesheet electronically using "Save As" to rename, then print timesheet.
 10. Sign your printed timesheet and ask your supervisor to sign it before mailing to MCC.
 - Plan ahead...If your supervisor will not be available to sign your timesheet at the end of the week or Monday, make pre-arrangements for other staff to sign. If your supervisor is out unexpectedly, and no one is available to sign your timesheet, call the MCC office and speak with Jo or Brenda to make alternate arrangements. This should be a rare occurrence, not the norm. If it happens on a regular basis, you will need to make alternate arrangements with your Host Site Supervisor.
 - Holidays provide an additional challenge including delayed mail delivery.

PLAN AHEAD...COMPLETE AND MAIL EARLY!

<p>TIMESHEETS WILL BE CONSIDERED INCOMPLETE AND RETURNED TO THE MEMBER FOR COMPLETION IF ANY OF THE ABOVE IS MISSING OR INCORRECT.</p>

See Electronic Timesheet at website: <http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc/smeevl.html>

Maine Conservation Corps

Worker's Compensation Procedure for Reporting Injury

If an MCC Environmental Educator is injured at a service site, during work hours, the injury must be reported **within 24 hours to MCC and your Host Site and within 48 hours to the insurance company**. Prompt reporting is necessary to avoid loss of benefits or problems with payments.

In most cases, the injured person will be seeking medical care, and the following steps can be taken at the medical provider's office. Check out www.memic.com to find a medical provider in your area. **If medical treatment is delayed, the injury still needs to be reported within 24 hours.**

Note: Worker's Compensation Insurance is for work site injuries only.

For other sickness and health problems, use your NASCC Corps Member Health Insurance Card.

Step 1: If MCC Environmental Educator is injured: fill out the "Employee" and "Claim Information" sections of the **Employer's First Report of Occupational Injury or Disease** form.

Step 2: Call Linda Shapleigh at the MCC office and **give the information to her so she can submit a report**. You can call Linda at 1-800-245-5627 or 624-6086.

If **no answer**, you should call: Jo Hersom (W) 624-6091

Step 3: If the injury when no one is available in the MCC office, **you must report the injury directly to the insurance company** in order to comply with the 48 hours requirement. Request electronic copy sent to Linda.Shapleigh@maine.gov

Contact Information:

Maine Employer's Mutual Insurance Co. (MEMIC)

MCC Policy No. 18100 43206

First Report Line **1-800-636-4292**

Complete the box below. Claim Number will be given to you during the call.

Step 4: **Instruct** the medical facility to send all bills directly to:

Maine Conservation Corps
124 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0124

Date: _____ Time: _____ am ___ pm ___
Call-in Person: _____
Claim Number: _____

Note: You are an MCC AmeriCorps member not an employee of your Host Site and not a volunteer.

**For additional First Report of Occupational Injury or Disease Forms
contact Brenda Webber at 207-324-6091.**

Working with Volunteers

- **Why do we need to work with Volunteers?**

1. It is an AmeriCorps requirement
2. It is a fun and rewarding way to “*Get Things Done*”
3. Community involvement – communities will maintain the projects for the long term
4. Helps with MCC name recognition
5. Future sustainability for MCC and the projects
6. Opportunity for individual growth, as you will be supervising volunteers

- **Recording Volunteer activity at MCC**

- As an AmeriCorps Requirement – MCC needs a way to report the numbers of volunteers.

1. **Before** the volunteer starts work of any kind, **they MUST complete and sign the Volunteer Assignment Agreement side of the green card and return the card to you.**

- The volunteer only needs to enroll in MCC’s Accident Insurance Plan if they do not have their own health insurance.
- It is important that they fill out their complete address.

2. **Just before** the volunteer leaves the project, return the card and ask her/him to fill out the **Volunteer Feedback Survey**. After the volunteer has completed the survey, collect the card.

- All the information collected on this card is important to meet the requirements of the MCC AmeriCorps program.
 - Demographic information
 - New or Returning Volunteer
 - Number of Hours & Days
 - Dates of service

- **Advice for good volunteer days:**

- Good communication.
- Plan Ahead
- Proper safety gear & equipment as appropriate for the project.
- Orient volunteers to the project goal, safety and details of what they will be doing
- Delegate the work to be sure the day runs smoothly.
- Good experience; as you will oversee the project and the volunteers.

- **Also:**

- All volunteers MCC sends a Thank You card and a ProMotive pro deal account.
- Don’t forget to nominate individuals for the Volunteer of the Month Award!

- **Green Volunteer Assignment Agreement/Volunteer Feedback Survey cards:**

- Front is completed and signed by all volunteers before their service
- Back is completed by the volunteer as they complete their service
- Submit to MCC each week with timesheet

Maine Conservation Corps

Day Volunteer Equipment List

The Maine Conservation Corps is committed to safety. You will be expected to wear appropriate clothing, gloves and footwear as outlined below. We will provide you with a hardhat that you will be required to wear. Additional safety equipment, such as ear and eye protection, will be provided as needed, and may be required.

Day Pack: Large enough to carry 2 1-quart water bottles, lunch, raingear, gloves, sunscreen, bug spray and a warm layer.

Work Clothes: Come dressed to work in pants, work shirt, socks, and boots. **NO shorts!**

Boots: Sturdy, good quality boots are essential. All-leather work boots are recommended. Most hiking boots are sufficient. **NO tennis shoes, trail shoes, sandals, etc.**

Rain Gear: Suitable for construction work. Gore-tex is fine, but be aware that it can tear.

Work Gloves: Quality, heavy-duty work gloves, preferably all-leather.

Water Bottles: **2 1-Quart** water bottles. **Bring two**, as the work sites are not always close to water. Plastic juice bottles work well. Please do not bring glass.

Lunch & Snacks: Bring food & snacks for the day! You'll be working hard volunteering and will want to have plenty of food to restore all that energy you'll be using!

Other Items: Bug spray, sunscreen, sunglasses.

MCC work sites are not always located near bathroom facilities; if this is the case, you will be expected to follow Leave No Trace (LNT) Principles.

For additional Volunteer Assignment Agreement/Volunteer Feedback Survey Cards call the MCC office 207-624-6091.

For additional copies of the Medical Claim Questionnaire for Injured Volunteers call the MCC office 207-624-6091.

End of Quarter Accomplishment Report (QR) Instructions

End of Quarter Accomplishment Report (QR) and QR Spreadsheet are a requirement of the program and are submitted electronically (e-mailed to the Environmental Educator Program Coordinator) at the end of each calendar quarter as follows:

- 1st Quarter - April 2, 2010
- 2nd Quarter - July 2, 2010
- 3rd Quarter - October , 2010
- 4th Quarter – At time of Exit

In addition, a hard copy (signed and dated by the member and host site supervisor) is due in the MCC office no later than one week after each electronic due date. It is not necessary to print the QR Spreadsheet.

The member shall save the master electronic documents in a folder named “Quarterly Reports” on their computer replacing jhersom with their first initial and last name. These documents must be renamed each quarter by replacing “1234” with a 1, 2, 3 or 4 (for corresponding quarter). Before e-mailing these documents to MCC, the member should check to be sure their first initial, last name and quarter # are included in the doc name or the e-mail will be returned for correction.

There are three sections of the QR Spreadsheet that are used to collect data throughout the quarter and a column for the member’s initials. If a member does not have activity in a particular section, the section will remain blank.

The outline below contains instructions and tips for completing the QR Spreadsheet and QR.

I. Volunteers

- A. *QR Spreadsheet* - Volunteers are individuals who are recruited or directly supervised by AmeriCorps members. The green Volunteer Feedback Survey is the tool members will use to collect the data for Section A. *Recruitment and Training of Volunteers* of the QR spreadsheet. All columns must be totaled before submitting to Program Coordinator.
- B. *QR* – Members write a description of volunteer projects and activities.

II. School Activities

- A. *QR Spreadsheet* – Before each activity, the member must decide on a method of testing students’ knowledge of the lesson topic. Postcard assessment is one example; members hand out a blank postcard at the end of the lesson and ask students to write or draw three things they learned from the day’s activity or lesson. The post cards are collected but they do not have to be submitted to MCC. The postcards are a **tool for members** to assess the students’ understanding of the lesson or activity. Another example is pre and post testing; students are asked the same three questions before and after the lesson or activity. The numbers are recorded in the before and after columns in Section C. *School Activities Increasing*

Awareness of the Environment of the QR spreadsheet. All columns must be totaled before submitting to Program Coordinator.

- B. QR –Members write a description of topics and their impact on the students during School Activities.

III. Great Story

- A. *QR Spreadsheet* – There is no corresponding section for Great Story on the QR spreadsheet.
- B. QR – Members write an inspirational **paragraph or poem** which demonstrates the impact their service had on them and/or their organization and community. The Great Story should answer the following 3 questions:
 1. Why does your service matter?
 2. How has your service impacted the local community?
 3. What have you gained from this quarter's experience?

IV. Highlights

- A. *QR Spreadsheet* – There is no corresponding section for Great Story on the QR spreadsheet.
- B. QR – Members attach press releases, media stories, pictures and other examples of their service.

Member Training

- A. *QR Spreadsheet* – Record all training offered by MCC **and** the Host Site in *Section B. Member Training* of the QR spreadsheet.
- B. QR – There is no corresponding section for Member Training on the QR.

Certification signatures and dates are required on the hard copy of your QR report.

**Maine Conservation Corps
AmeriCorps Environmental Educators
2009-2010 End of Quarter Accomplishment Report**

NAME: _____ **HOST SITE:** _____

QUARTER (check one):

Electronic Due date:

<input type="checkbox"/> First Quarter (1/1/10 – 3/31/10)	4/2
<input type="checkbox"/> Second Quarter (4/1/10 – 6/30/10)	7/2
<input type="checkbox"/> Third Quarter (7/1/10 - 9/30/10)	10/1
<input type="checkbox"/> Fourth Quarter (10/1/10 - Exit)	at time of Exit

I. VOLUNTEERS

Provide a description of volunteer projects and activities. Include reflection.

II. SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Provide a description of topics and their impact on the students during your school activities.

III. GREAT STORY

Write an inspirational **paragraph or poem** which demonstrates the impact your service had on you and/or your community.

Your Great Story should answer the following 3 questions:

1. Why does your service matter?
2. How has your service impacted the local community?
3. What have you gained professionally and personally from this quarter's experience?

IV. HIGHLIGHTS

Electronically attach press releases, media stories, pictures and other examples of your service.

I **certify**, to the best of my knowledge, that all information presented in this report is accurate.

MCC AmeriCorps Member

Host Site Supervisor

Date

Date

- **Member Evaluations for members and supervisors:**

- Pre-Term Evaluation - members complete Survey Monkey online
- Mid-Term Evaluation – supervisors complete Survey Monkey online
 - Start date October 6 - 1700 hour - Mid-term is due March 5
 - Start date January 5 - 1700 hour - Mid-term is due June 4
 - Start date January 5 900 hour - Mid-term is due March 26
 - Start date May 11 900 hour - Mid-term is due Jul 30
- Post -Term Evaluation – supervisors and members complete separate Survey Monkey surveys online
 - Due at time of member's Exit

- **Member Portfolio** –Submitted at time of member's Exit

Each Maine Conservation Corps member is required to submit a portfolio, at the end of their term of service that will serve as a record of their experiences with the Maine Conservation Corps and host site.

Think of your portfolio as your reflection of your term of service and as a resource for someone stepping into your position. Describing and documenting your projects, contacts, ideas and experiences in a portfolio will serve as an invaluable record and a resource for the MCC program, your host site and future AmeriCorps members.

Here are some materials you should include in your completed portfolio:

- ❖ Media clippings- flyers, newspapers, school newspapers, press releases, etc.
- ❖ Curriculum/unit for an education outreach program.
- ❖ Data on research - water tests, nutrient management plan.
- ❖ A comprehensive list of your volunteers with contact information.
- ❖ A comprehensive list of partner organizations that helped with your projects.
- ❖ Reflection of your service including, projects, helpful hints for managing projects, the communities, contacts, students, the MCC, etc.
- ❖ Photographs and/or scanned copies of photos.
- ❖ Posters or booklets you created.
- ❖ Copies of evaluation/assessment tools, journal entries, Volunteer Feedback Forms, Quarterly Reports, etc.

Be creative. Have FUN!

The portfolio will be turned in during your final week of service. You may compile your portfolio in a binder with a title page, table of contents, and a thorough review of your projects and activities or in a PowerPoint presentation. Make sure you label all the materials and photos, including names of people, places and events.

Please make 3 copies: a copy for the MCC office, your host site and a copy for yourself.

You can check out examples of member portfolios at the MCC office.

- **AmeriCorps Exit Paperwork** – the member will receive an Exit packet from MCC a few weeks before their term of service is complete. The member will send or stop by the MCC office with the completed Exit paperwork and Portfolio. This is required for the member to receive the Education Award.

2009 - 2010 Schedule of Events

October 6	ORIENTATION for members starting their service in October 2009 MCC Office, Hallowell		
January 5	ORIENTATION – Meeting for all MCC Environmental Educators Camp Mechuwana, Winthrop (overnight at Camp Mechuwana)		
January 6	First Aid, CPR training and certification Camp Mechuwana, Winthrop (overnight at Camp Mechuwana)		
January 7	Maine Driving Dynamics 8:30 – 3	Elkins Room, Augusta	
January 8	First day at Host Site for 1700 and 900 hour members who began service January 5		
January 19	Martin Luther King Day – All MCC members must be involved in a MLK service project		
Feb 11	MCC AmeriCorps Day of Networking Camp Mechuwana, Winthrop		
March 5	Mid-Term Evaluation done by supervisor for 1700 hour members who began service October 6 (hard copy)		
Mar 23 or 24 (tentative)	AmeriCorps State Spring Conference (snow date March 24)	MCCS	Hutchinson Center, Belfast
March 12	Mid-term Evaluation Survey done by supervisor for 900 hour members who began service January 5 (hard copy)		
April 2	Electronic 1st Quarterly Report due		
April 9	Hard Copy 1st Quarterly Report due		
April 16	***Earth Day Project - Local Event or Lawrence Energy Literacy Day, Skowhegan		
May 8-15	National AmeriCorps Week – All MCC members must be involved with a community service project		
May 11	ORIENTATION for 900 hour members who begin service on May 11		
June 4	Mid-Term Evaluation done by supervisor for 1700 hour members who began service January 5 (hard copy)		
June 19	End Date for 900 hour members who began service January 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Electronic 2nd Quarterly Report due ▪ Hard Copy 2nd Quarterly Report due ▪ Post-Term Evaluation Survey (Survey Monkey) due ▪ Portfolio due 		

- Exit Paperwork due

- June 23-25 ***MCC Celebration of Service at Katahdin Lake Wilderness Camps
<http://www.katahdinlakewildernesscamps.com/home.html>
 Details will follow in April.
- July 2 Electronic 2nd Quarterly Report due
- July 9 Hard Copy 2nd Quarterly Report due
- July 30 Mid-Term Evaluation done by supervisor for 900 hour members who began service May 11 (hard copy) due
- August 14 End date for 1700 hour members who began service October 8
- Electronic 4th Quarterly Report due
 - Hard Copy 4th Quarterly Report due
 - Post-Term Evaluation Survey (Survey Monkey) due
 - Portfolio due to MCC
 - Exit Paperwork due
- 9/11 National 9/11 Day of Service I Serve. I Remember. MCCS ???
- October 1 Electronic 3rd Quarterly Report due
- October 8 Hard Copy 3rd Quarterly Report due
- October 12 Governor's Blaine House Conference on Volunteerism MCCS UMO, Orono (tentative)
- October 13 AmeriCorps State Fall Conference MCCS Tanglewood Camps, Lincolnville (tentative)
- October 23 End date for 900 hour members who began service May 11
- Electronic 4th Quarterly Report due
 - Hard Copy 4th Quarterly Report due
 - Post-Term Evaluation Survey (Survey Monkey) due
 - Portfolio due
 - Exit Paperwork due
- November 13 End date for 1700 hour members who began service January 5
- Electronic 4th Quarterly Report due
 - Hard Copy 4th Quarterly Report due
 - Post-Term Evaluation Survey (Survey Monkey) due
 - Portfolio due
 - Exit Paperwork due

*** Expected but not mandatory